

REMARKS

Claims 1-20 have been canceled. Claims 21-27 have been added. No new matter has been added. Support for the new claims can be found in the Specification as originally filed and, in particular, Figs. 3, 4a and 4b.

The Applicant respectfully asserts that the new claims are patentable over the cited prior art for the following reasons.

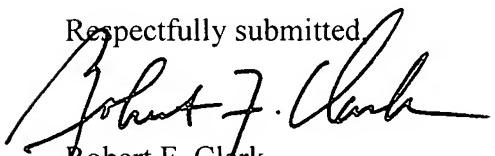
Berlinghof et al. (US 2002/0163306) teaches a radially constricted seal with a disk-like closure element and not, as claimed by the Applicant, a pinch in which the plane of the pinch lies in the common plane of the two inner electrodes. Further more, unlike the Applicant's claimed invention, a constant distance between the inner electrodes is not maintained in the seal. The radial constriction which forms the seal depresses the electrodes towards one another. *See*, Fig. 3 and paragraphs 10 - 13 and 19. There are also no supply conductors in the seal region which are held in mechanical contact to the electrodes by the seal.

Goto (US 3,543,361) teaches sealing reflector and bulb-type incandescent lamps and not a tubular dielectric discharge lamp. Goto seals the lamps using a tank of molten glass and not with a pinch seal. Goto does not teach inner electrodes arranged diametrically on the inside of a discharge vessel nor anything about the importance of maintaining a constant distance between the electrodes.

Nieda et al. (US 4,366,409) teach a halogen incandescent lamp with a pinch seal. Nieda et al. do not teach inner electrodes arranged diametrically on the inner side of a discharge vessel. Although Nieda et al. show a constant distance between the inner lead-in wires 4 into the pinch seal region, if the inner lead wires had been placed on the inner side of the bulb 2, then a constant distance would not have been maintained. Moreover, Nieda et al. do not teach anything about the importance of maintaining a constant distance between inner lead-in wires. The outer lead-in wires 6 of Nieda et al. are welded to the inner lead-in wires 4 and do not overlap and bear against the inner lead-in wires nor are the wires maintained in mechanical contact by the pinch seal.  
Figs. 1A and 1B; Col. 4, line 51 to Col.5 line 8.

In view of the foregoing amendment, it is believed that the Examiner's rejections have been overcome and that the application is in condition for allowance. Such action is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,



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